

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Chemtool Fire - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region V

Subject: POLREP #2
Progress
Chemtool Fire

Rockton, IL
Latitude: 42.4718011 Longitude: -89.0646749

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From: Craig Thomas, On-Scene Coordinator

Date: 6/16/2021

Reporting Period: 6/15/2021 to 6/16/2021

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	C5TM	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:		Action Memo Date:	6/14/2021
Response Authority:	CERCLA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead:	PRP	Incident Category:	Removal Action
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	6/14/2021	Start Date:	6/14/2021
Demob Date:		Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:		RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	6/14/2021
FPN#:	E21510	Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response

1.1.2 Site Description

The site is located at the Chemtool Incorporated facility in Rockton, Winnebago County, Illinois. At approximately 07:00 on June 14th, several fire departments from Illinois and Wisconsin responded to a large, six-alarm fire at the facility. Chemtool Incorporated manufactures greases, additives, and other fluids. The facility quickly became fully-involved in the fire and had several explosions.

1.1.2.1 Location

The site is located at 1165 Prairie Hill Road in Rockton, Winnebago County, Illinois.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The facility housed several tanks of various greases, oils, additives, and other fluids, that have been or could be consumed in the fire. The smoke plume and runoff from the fire threatens to release contaminants into the atmosphere, as well as potentially discharging the contents of the tanks to the Rock River.

Over a million gallons of crude were stored on the facility. The facility is located approximately 700 feet from the Rock River. Given the large volume of oil in containers with compromised integrity, EPA believes there substantial threat of discharge of oil to a navigable waterway.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

On-Scene Coordinators (OSC) Craig Thomas, Matt Villicana, Lauren McCarrell, and Corey Peaslee mobilized to the site on June 14, 2021. On June 14, 2021, at approximately 09:30 hours, EPA Region 5 Phone Duty Officer activated the Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START) to respond to the incident.

According to the Rockton Fire Chief and Potentially Responsible Party (PRP), the fire was discovered at approximately 0700 hours on June 14, 2021. The Rockton Fire Department, Rockford Fire Department, and several other Fire Departments from Illinois and Wisconsin Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) responded to the incident and are conducting fire suppression activities.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

The Rockton Fire Department along with several other fire departments from Illinois and Wisconsin Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) are on-site performing fire suppression activities. A mandatory evacuation was issued for all residents within a one-mile radius at approximately 0700 on June 14, 2021. The evacuation center is located at the Roscoe Middle School in Roscoe, IL. As of 1700 June 16th, the evacuation order remains in place.

USEPA has deployed five OSCs and ten START contractors to provide air monitoring support for the fire.

USEPA consulted with Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to establish action levels for air monitoring data.

The Interagency Modelling and Atmospheric Assessment Center (IMAAC) was consulted by USEPA to develop plume models for the release. The models developed by IMAAC estimate the direction and extent of the plumes and are used as a guide tool to determine placement of air monitoring stations.

USEPA START contractors are performing community air monitoring and sampling for volatile organic compounds (VOCs), lower explosive limit (LEL), carbon monoxide (CO), hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), oxygen (O₂), particulates, and metals.

Illinois Civil Support Team (CST) members are also providing air monitoring support for the response by deploying AreaRAEs to monitor VOCs, LEL, CO, H₂S, and O₂.

Tuesday morning the RP asked the Incident Commander to allow the use of firefighting foam (the only available firefighting foam onsite at that time). The IC made the decision to allow usage of the foam; at the time it was unknown that the only foam on site at the time contained PFAS. Upon observing pumping operations beginning, U.S. EPA and Illinois EPA requested a halt to those operations until additional boom was deployed on the Rock River and vac trucks were put on standby at several stations downriver to ensure that any foam other materials were contained. In the early afternoon, the non-fluorinated foam Vapor Suppressant Product (VSP) arrived onsite and any continued usage of foam will use VSP.

Additional booms were placed in the Rock River in case of site runoff at 0900 on Wednesday 6/16.

One additional OSC has been deployed to the site and arrived at 1630 on June 16th.

The fire is still burning; however, the smoke has greatly reduced in volume as firefighting efforts continue.

2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

The RP has been identified as Chemtool Incorporated.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

USEPA START contractors will continue to provide 24-hour air monitoring support during the response while fire suppression activities are ongoing. Additional resources will be deployed for air monitoring during the Old Settlers Festival.

USEPA START contractors also remain prepared to monitor and collect samples from the Rock River, if sheening or any other evidence of a discharge is observed.

Debris cleanup is slated to begin by the RP's contractors over the next 24 hours.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

USEPA START Contractors will continue to provide 24-hour air monitoring support during the response while fire suppression activities are ongoing.

USEPA START contractors also remain prepared to monitor and collect samples from the Rock River if evidence of a discharge is observed.

Heavy rains are predicted for Thursday night June 17th, and contingency plans are being put in place by the RP for possible runoff from the site, including a trench and booms.

2.2.2 Issues

A detection of HCN was detected above ATSDR screening values (above 1.0 ppm) via the CST air monitoring equipment overnight on 6/14 pm to 6/15 am. USEPA conducted further investigation of HCN overnight on 6/15 pm to 6/16 and preliminary evaluation of the data did not reveal any detections above the ATSDR screening value of 1.0 ppm.

2.3 Logistics Section

No information available at this time.

2.4 Finance Section

2.4.1 Narrative

On 6/16/2021, U.S. EPA requested an FPN (E21510) to address the substantial threat of discharge of oil to a navigable waterway.

Estimated Costs *

	Budgeted	Total To Date	Remaining	% Remaining
Extramural Costs				
START	\$50,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$10,000.00	20.00%
Intramural Costs				
Total Site Costs	\$50,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$10,000.00	20.00%

* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

2.5 Other Command Staff

2.5.1 Safety Officer

The fire departments are providing a safety officer

2.5.2 Liaison Officer

EPA OSC is serving in this role

2.5.3 Information Officer

EPA has a Public Information Officer established for this response

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

EPA Region 5
Illinois EPA
Illinois Emergency Management Agency
Illinois Civil Support Team
Illinois State Police
Mutual Aid Box Alarm System
Winnebago County Sherriff
Ogle County Sherriff

4. Personnel On Site

EPA - 5
START - 10
Illinois EPA - 4
IL CST - 8
Firefighters from multiple fire departments.

5. Definition of Terms

No information available at this time.

6. Additional sources of information

6.1 Internet location of additional information/report

response.epa.gov/chemtoolfire

6.2 Reporting Schedule

It is anticipated that POLREPS will be provided at 24-hour intervals

7. Situational Reference Materials

response.epa.gov/chemtoolfire

